

Tunnel crews complete the tunnel drive

After tunneling beneath downtown, our contractor, Seattle Tunnel Partners, has now completed the final stretch of the tunnel drive. The tunnel path roughly follows First Avenue until Stewart Street, where it curves toward the north end of downtown.

Meanwhile, an entirely separate crew is hard at work in the newly-built portion of tunnel behind the tunneling machine, building the structures that will support the tunnel’s future double-deck highway.



Crews working for Seattle Tunnel Partners roll up a section of the conveyor belt used to remove muck during tunneling.



A view of the SR 99 tunneling machine's cutterhead from the bottom of the disassembly pit near Seattle Center.



In this February 2017 photo, crews assemble rebar for a section of the foundation that will support the northbound SR 99 roadway and the wall on the west side of the roadway.

For more information

Visit the website at www.AlaskanWayViaduct.org
Call the hotline at 1-888-AWV-LINE
Send an email to viaduct@wsdot.wa.gov
Follow @BerthaDigsSR99

Send a letter to:
Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program
Washington State Department of Transportation
999 Third Ave., Suite 2200
Seattle, WA 98104

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Alaskan Way Viaduct

REPLACEMENT

PROGRAM



May 2017

Building a new State Route 99 through Seattle

The Alaskan Way Viaduct, an elevated section of State Route 99 in Seattle, was built in the 1950s, and decades of daily wear and tear have taken their toll on the structure. Because of the viaduct’s age and vulnerability to earthquakes, replacing it is critical to public safety.

A number of projects will work together to replace the viaduct:

- A two-mile-long tunnel beneath downtown Seattle.
- A mile-long stretch of new highway that connects to the south entrance of the tunnel, near Seattle’s stadiums.
- A new Alaskan Way surface street connecting the southern end of SR 99 to downtown Seattle.
- A new overpass at the south end of downtown that allows traffic to bypass train blockages near Seattle’s busiest port terminal.
- Demolition of the viaduct’s downtown waterfront section.

Key takeaways

- Removing the Alaskan Way Viaduct will improve the SR 99 corridor and clear the way for new public space on Seattle’s downtown waterfront.
- Since breaking ground on our first viaduct-related project in 2007, we have successfully completed 24 projects that were led or funded by the state.
- Construction of the largest project – the SR 99 tunnel – began in 2011. Tunneling beneath Seattle minimizes traffic disruptions while we replace the viaduct.
- Crews completed the 9,270-foot tunnel drive on April 4, 2017.
- Future highway and ramp connections are taking shape at the tunnel’s north and south portals. Crews are also building the roadway within the tunnel.

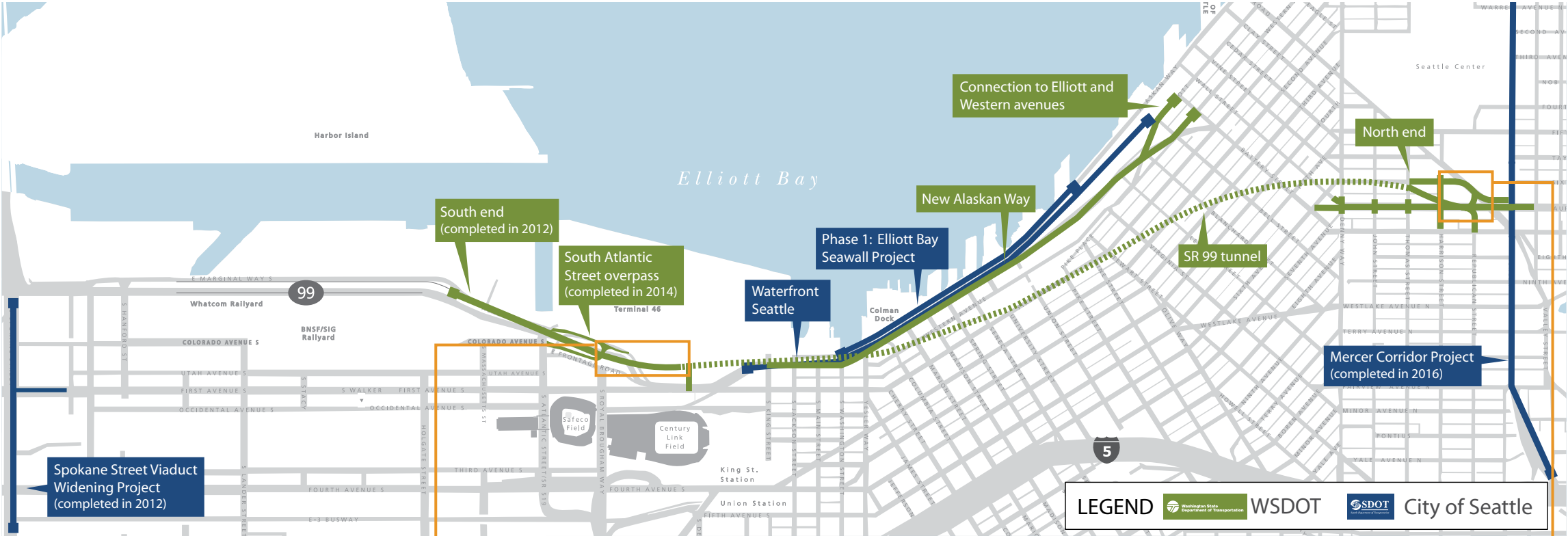


Tunnel workers pose with the SR 99 tunneling machine after Bertha moved into the disassembly pit near Seattle Center.

WSDOT’s role in viaduct replacement

The state is responsible for leading or funding 32 of the projects that will function together to reshape the SR 99 corridor. The state’s legislatively approved budget for the viaduct replacement projects is \$3.1 billion. An additional budget need of up to \$149 million is subject to legislative approval. Funding comes from state, federal and local sources, as well as the Port of Seattle and tolls. Of that amount, approximately \$2 billion is allocated to the SR 99 Tunnel Project. Seattle Tunnel Partners’ contract is for \$1.35 billion.

As part of the viaduct program, King County, the City of Seattle and the Port of Seattle are making street, transit, seawall and waterfront improvements. The city is responsible for building new public open space along the waterfront, replacing the Elliott Bay Seawall and improving other city streets such as the Spokane Street Viaduct and the Mercer corridor.



South end of the tunnel

The tunnel will change the way drivers use SR 99 in Seattle. Drivers approaching the tunnel from either direction will face a choice depending on their destination: use the tunnel to bypass downtown or exit to city streets and head into downtown. From the south, on- and off-ramps near the stadiums will connect SR 99 to a new waterfront surface street. This connection and new east-west connections between the new waterfront street and downtown will replace the function of today’s midtown viaduct ramps and also provide improved access to the waterfront.



A rendering of the tunnel's south portal.

North end of the tunnel

At the tunnel's north end, downtown access will be similar to today, with on- and off-ramps near Seattle Center. In August 2015, traffic on Aurora Avenue North shifted to a new, curved structure that passes over the future northbound lanes exiting the tunnel. Additionally, John, Thomas and Harrison streets will be reconnected across Aurora Avenue North, improving access between the Queen Anne, Uptown and South Lake Union neighborhoods, as well as to and from SR 99.



A rendering of the tunnel's north portal.



This photo shows progress on the elevated section of the future southbound SR 99 off-ramp to South Dearborn Street.



Crews working for Seattle Tunnel Partners install steel mesh as part of their work to fireproof the ceiling below the top deck of the SR 99 tunnel.



This February 2017 photo shows the view of the SR 99 tunnel from the back end of Bertha, the SR 99 tunneling machine.



This February 2017 photo shows progress on the operations building at the south portal of the SR 99 tunnel.



In this March 2017 photo, you are looking south at the reconstructed section of Sixth Avenue North, which reopened to traffic in December 2016 between Mercer Street and Harrison Street in Seattle.



Bertha breaks into her disassembly pit in this April 4, 2017 photo.